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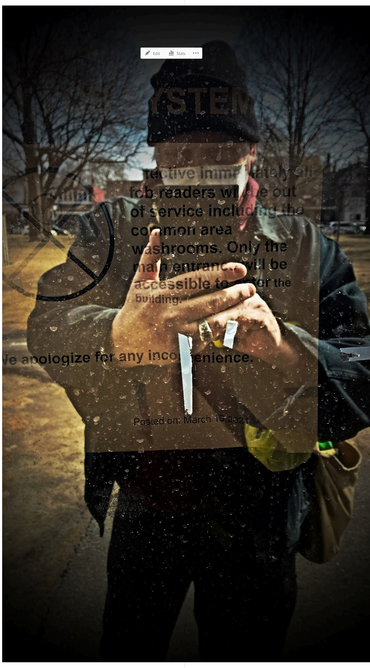
Ongoing Poor Communications and Some Suggestions for the new Seniors Housing Unit initiated by the Toronto Community Housing Corporation

March 23, 2021

Or should that be LONGTERM CRIMESCENE?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ffective immediately, fob readers will be out of service including the common area washrooms. Only the main entrance will be accessible to enter the building.
e apologize for any inconvenience.
Posted on: March 16, 2021

"Effective immediately: fob readers
will be out of service including
common area washrooms.
Only the main entrance will be
accessible to enter
the building."

Misleading and alarming,

because dated March 16 and still posted

March 21. If true it would have meant

"LOCKED OUT"

for nearly a week. Fortunately, in this case,

it wasn't true.

"Sorry for the inconvenience."

I bet!

1) There needs to be a detailed grounds map of every major building, indicating trouble-spots, emergency doors, fire and other security alarms, etc. This would provide a check-list for weekly rounds, and information for police, fire, and private security. It's worth noting that in the recent past Housing's own security has had inadequate knowledge of the layout of the grounds that they're supposed to patrol.

2) There should be weekly inspections – rounds – of all the grounds and external trouble-spots. There should be a check-list completed once a week of all the current trouble-spots, the state of emergency doors, laundries, and lobbie etc., as well as ongoing repairs and renovations.

3) These weekly rounds / inspection lists should provide the basic input at a weekly meeting of all the building staff, and local tenant services and community services coordinators. The latter coordinators should be made aware of the daily operations of the building as these have a major bearing on the physical and mental health of the tenants, and on security.

4) There should also be a list detailing every visit of police, fire, and Housing Security to the building. This information should also be discussed at a weekly meeting of all local staff and services coordinators. This could help forestall fire-related incidents due to bad housekeeping, illegal activity such as dealing destabilizing the building, and apartment takeovers.

5) There should be a progress report at the weekly meeting, detailing all current projects, repairs and renovations. There should be an ongoing follow-up of all these things, including emergency calls to the call centre, pest control, etc.

6) At least once a month, the regional services administrator should be present, to be made aware of the global state of the building and its tenants. The minutes of this meeting should be presented to the head of the Seniors Housing Unit for action where needed. When repairs are too long-outstanding or contracts are taking too long to complete, there needs to be a disciplinary mechanism to achieve greater efficiency. Recently the pest control initiative was too complicated and took too long, and there was total absence of oversight and accountability. The superintendent at that time merely washed here hands of the whole affair. This should not be allowed to happen. The installation of new cameras at 25 West Lodge has been a similarly protracted, dilatory, and wasteful affair – also characterized by very inadequate communication.

7) Speaking of bad communication – this unfortunately continues as bad as ever. The so-called seniors "newsletter" contains more silly propaganda than hard information about the Integrated Service Model, and the so-called Senior Tenants Advisory Committee has been co-opted by its minders, Grant Coffey and Reema Patel. Other communications within the building are confusing and sloppily done – Xeroxed, unsigned, taped loosely to the door, and never removed when obsolete or expired. All communications should be signed! If staff cannot take responsibility for their communications, maybe they shouldn't even make them.

8) As seniors buildings become independent from TCHC, a better procedure needs to be developed for transfers. The so-called "transfer specialists" should be abolished as just more administrative bloat. Local coordinators, medical and otherwise, should have the authority whether or not to grant a transfer within seniors properties. While input from the police could be helpful in the event of a "crisis transfer," they should never have the final word especially when their own self-interest could make them reluctant to acknowledge the gravity of a situation and put them in conflict with the well-being of a tenant. More weight should be accorded to medical authorities and their input. Doctors and other medical people know when the physical circumstances of a tenancy have become unhealthy and would be improved by a move.

9) The new Seniors Housing Unit needs to establish a better relationship with the police. The unit should rely more on its own security, with special training for assisting an aging population with specific issues ranging from elder-abuse to dementia. All activity by police and security should be reported at the weekly meeting. Obtaining reports from Housing security should be no problem. Arrangements would likely have to be made with local police divisions to obtain a weekly report of their activity on Senior Housing Unit property.

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